

# Ocean Avenue PTO

*Engaging People. Building Community.*

## OAPTO Meeting Minutes

**Date:** March 18, 2015

**Time:** 6:10pm-7:30pm

**Called by:** Allison Ayan, OAPTO Vice President

**Number in Attendance:** 20 OAES community members

**Location:** OAES Library

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### **I. Welcome/Introductions/Announcements** (Allison Ayan, Vice President)

- Ground rules were reviewed by the Vice President

### **II. Approval of the Minutes** (Allison Ayan, Vice President)

- OAES community members voted to approve the February 2015 PTO meeting minutes

### **III. Treasurer's Report** (Chip Gavin)

- The PTO is on track to meet its updated revenue goal of \$38,600 for the current year, provided that call banking meets or exceeds its fiscal target
- The PTO likely will have at least one more budget amendment to reflect updated forecasts and to ensure a balanced budget at year end

### **IV. Fundraising Report** (John Gordon)

- Call Banking will be on April 8<sup>th</sup> from 5:30pm to 8:30pm
- This is the final fundraiser for the fiscal year
- Volunteers are needed during the event - contact Volunteer Director Tobin Scipione if interested helping

### **V. Staff of the Month** (Julie Lannon, Nominating Director)

- The PTO recognized the entire 2<sup>nd</sup> grade team – Mrs. McGhie, Ms. Partridge, Mrs. Nogar and Mrs. Serio – for their outstanding teamwork and co-teaching approach
- The team has introduced a very successful approach to meeting kids where they are at academically – the entire grade is divided into groups called “flex groups” that meet for 6 weeks with support from additional staff
- The focus of the groups has been on math but will soon be switching to literacy
- The team reviews data beforehand and does post-testing to measure results
- The Vice President reviewed comments from parents and students in honor of the second grade team and gift cards were presented to the honorees

### **VI. Update from Dr. Coursey**

- There is a new OT specialist on board
- Coffee talks have been going great - next one is in April

- School budget is in progress - OAES is facing a \$28,000 reduction due to staffing changes that reflects changes in compensation of staff, not a change in the amount of staff or resources
- School is focusing again on attendance to ensure students and parents understand the consequences of missing school with a goal of improving attendance
- New web site is being rolled out - <http://oceanavenue.portlandschools.org>
- Parent teacher conferences are next week
- International Baccalaureate is going really well this year and exceeding expectations
- Sea Port essay contest winners are being awarded
- PPS Parent Survey is now live and goal is 30 percent parent participation - please participate!
- 20 minutes is being added to next year's school day and 180 minutes for staff development - details are still being settled
- Monthly assemblies have been going well - this month was empathy with a focus on the random acts of kindness tree
- Last day of school will be in the June 19<sup>th</sup> to June 24<sup>th</sup> window

### **VII. Smarter Balanced Testing** (Dr. Coursey, Principal)

- Tests start April 30<sup>th</sup>
- Older grades have started reviewing and practicing for tests, especially since it is all electronic - students seem to have no problem with the technology
- Test requires keyboard responses but is untimed
- Parents took individual practice tests of various kinds in the school computer lab

### **VIII. Guest Speaker** (Dr. Jeff Beaudry, USM Department of Professional Education)

- Dr. Beaudry was invited to speak about Smarter Balanced Testing
- He opened with "we're talking about a new test. A new test, a challenging test, and a new testing environment."
- The purpose behind the testing was to create a challenging assessment encompassing Common Core
- Students are not going to walk away saying "Yes, I nailed that."
- The group discussed the experience of taking the practice tests with Dr. Beaudry
- Writing is required on the new test, including on the math portion, and writing in this environment means keyboarding
- Part of the test is about persistence when confronted with a tough problem
- The test is one measure of a student, it does not define a child - parents need to remember it is just one measure
- The most common reason for a standardized test is to gauge the performance of the school overall - next it can be used as a measure of teacher and administrator performance and smarter balance is part of that
- There are always funding strings attached but there is no clear or direct tie to funding and the Smarter Balance testing
- It is a rigorous test but not a high-stakes test - it does not determine advancement from grade to grade or anything like that
- There is no reason why the school community can't have a data walk and share that data with parents and the community
- The test results will provide relevant information that allows parents and teachers to guide student instruction and addresses weaknesses

### **IX. Adjourn**